

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL LAZARUS, DMD –
VOLUNTEER DENTIST TO KIDS IN CRISIS
CONCERNING RAISED BILL NO. 981 –
AN ACT CONCERNING THE PLACEMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN
CONGREGATE CARE FACILITIES

FEBRUARY 22 2011

Senator Musto, Representative Fawcett, distinguished members of the Select Committee on Children, my name is Michael Lazarus, DMD, and I am a volunteer Dentist at Kids in Crisis. I have been associated with Kids in Crisis for fifteen years and over that time have treated hundreds of kids. These kids have presented with varying needs; from healthy dentitions in need of simple cleaning procedures to extensive dental problems including but not limited to rampant decay, abscess formation, and varying need for extraction. I am a general Dentist and frequently serve a triage capacity as I have often found cases that require a specialist. Between the Kids in Crisis staff and my various professional connections we can manage these emergent. Bringing these kids to a foster home without thorough professional evaluation of their health is illogical if our purpose is to help stabilize their environment and provide for the kids to thrive. As you can imagine most of these cases do not occur in a healthy home but more often in a declining situation. Health and wellbeing are frequently neglected. By the time we see them in crisis many routine needs have been neglected and require urgent care. Only properly trained health care personnel, working in concert with consultants are capable of assessing the immediate needs of these kids. Foster parents, no matter how well intended, cannot. We must put their health and wellbeing ahead of any other consideration. Please do not change the existing program at Kids in Crisis. The existing program serves the most needy children of Connecticut at their most vulnerable time in an ideal manner.

Thank you for your time,

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